

Vocabulary Strategies for a Fourth Grade Classroom

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Abstract

For this project I worked with twelve of my fourth grade students from a local school in the southwestern part of Stokes County, North Carolina on increasing their vocabulary skills through the development and implementation of seven vocabulary strategies. During the Literature Review I came across the following seven strategies: Prediction; Association; Verification; and Evaluation (P.A.V.E) procedure; Vocabulary Anchors, semantic webs, concept cards; Pictionary; Jeopardy, and Word sorts. These seven different vocabulary strategies were presented over the course of a seven week period. After Christmas break my students always seem to struggle remembering the vocabulary words from the beginning of the year. Each goal's vocabulary words build on the previous goals. When students forget the vocabulary words from the previous units it keeps them from beginning the next goal.

Introduction

For this project I will be using students from my fourth grade classroom. I have twelve students in my classroom. I have four boys and eight girls. Ten of my students are African American. I have one Caucasian student, and one Hispanic student. At the end of each nine weeks the students take a goal assessment to measure how much they have learned over those nine weeks. There are four math goals that are tested at the end of each school year. Twenty five percent of my students are below grade level, and are at a really significant place in their school year, in accordance with the state standards. The students really seem to have great vocabulary word recall until after their Christmas break. During their Christmas break the students do not study their vocabulary words nor are they presented with new vocabulary words.

Area of Focus

The purpose of this study is to describe the different vocabulary strategies presented to my students over a seven week period as it relates to the most effective vocabulary strategies so that we may better understand what strategies are the most effective to help students begin to recall previous learned words and begin to use them as building blocks for the next unit's vocabulary terms.

Literature Review

Bannon, Fisher, Pozzi, & Wessel, 1990. Pave Procedure. Retrieved on February 10,2012

from <http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/PAVEProcedure.html>

This article is about using the P.A.V.E. procedure, this allows students to “check the dictionary definition against the context in which the word appeared” (p.1). It also “helps students remember word meanings by associating the word with a visual image. (p.1). I know that by having my student connect their vocabulary words with a visual image they will be able to recall the image and hopefully remember the vocabulary word that the image belongs too. The P.A.V.E. procedure stands for (Prediction; (Association; (Verification; (Evaluation).

Beck, I., McKeown, M., Kucan, L. (2010) *Choosing Words to Teach* Retrieved on January 14, 2012 from <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/40304/>

This article is about choosing the right words to teach your students. This article is very important because as a teacher I want to make sure that I am giving my student’s words that they know and also words that challenge them. One of the ways that a child learns new vocabulary words is by identifying words that are a challenge for you and learning the definition for the next time that you come across that same word. I am very excited to begin looking through our weekly reading selections and making my own Tier Two and Three word picks and begin using the strategies mentioned in the other articles to teach these words to my students. This article was very good about giving you guideline to use when you were deciding which words go into each tier. There were several tests mentioned for each tier and examples of the most common words for each tier as well.

Bromley, Karen. (2002). Guidelines for Teaching Vocabulary. Teaching Resources. Retrieved

on January 14,2012 from

http://teacher.scholastic.com/reading/bestpractices/vocabulary/pdf/guidelines_vocab.pdf

This article is one of nine in a series of vocabulary strategies. This articles deals with connecting prior knowledge. “Simply repeating a new word isn’t enough to help students like Lakeisha and Mary Beth learn it. Instead, it’s important to tap into their personal schema, the prior knowledge they have stored in their long-term memories (Rumelhart, 1980). This means connecting the word to—or differentiating it from—what they already know (Rumelhart & Norman, 1981).” (p.1). This article will be useful because the very first strategy that I need to use when teaching new vocabulary words is to connect it to a word that they already know.

There are two different strategies that this article suggests using one is Vocabulary Anchors. To introduce Vocabulary Anchors, show students a photo or drawing of a boat at rest in calm water and talk about how a boat can drift away if it doesn’t have an anchor. (See Appendix, page 118.) Then, explain how we come to understand something new by “anchoring” it to something we already know” (p.1-2). The second strategy is picture walk words. connect students’ prior knowledge to a new story, and, in the process, help them learn new words” (p.2). I am really interested to try the Vocabulary Anchors strategy out because it looks like it would be a great way to help my students begin identifying their new vocabulary words by anchoring them with words they already know.

Feldman,K. (2008). Instructional Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary to Diverse

Learners: Practical Applications . Retrieved on February 9, 2011 from

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/2008conferences/diverse.pdf>

This article is about how a teacher can make a difference with their students just by the way that they discuss a vocabulary word. This presentation discusses how you can help your students with their vocabulary. A few of the ways that were presented in this presentation was “1. Pronounce Chorally; 2. Explain vs. Define; 3. Provide examples; 4. Deepen Understanding; 5. Review and Coach Use” (p.27). I plan to use all five of these methods each day when I am presenting our vocabulary words for our new unit of study. I hope to see results after the first few uses of these strategies. One of the second strategies that I plan to implement is the Explain vs. Define strategy. I don’t want to my students to just define their vocabulary words, I want them to be able to know them and use them. If I just have them define them they may be able to use it successfully for the post-test on Friday, but they will not have effectively learned the word.

Sedita, J. (2005).Effective Vocabulary Instruction. Insights on Learning Disabilities , 2(1), 33-45.

This article presents several tips for effective vocabulary instruction. Some of them deal with indirect vocabulary instruction; direct vocabulary instruction, teaching word parts,” (p.3-6), and several other strategies. I plan to use a combination of all three different types when working with my students. I know that by teaching word parts I will

be teaching my students how to successfully break down each unknown word that they might come upon while reading. Direct vocabulary instruction is also a great way to introduce new vocabulary words because you can model for your students how you approach difficult vocabulary words. It helps them see that you use the strategies that you are teaching them about.

Gooden, R., Carreker, S., Thornhill, A., Joshi, R. (2007). Instruction of Metacognitive Strategies Enhances Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary of Third-Grade Students. Retrieved on January 14, 2012 from
<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/21160/>

This article is about using different vocabulary strategies at an intervention school. The part that I will spend the most time looking at for my action research project will be part number two. This part of the lesson deals with the vocabulary of the story. “The teacher introduced one or two vocabulary words. Most words were added to semantic webs as demonstrated in Mrs. Thornton’s lesson. The semantic web connects the part of speech, synonyms, antonyms, and other related words to a new vocabulary word. Any words with multiple meanings were webbed on a multiple meaning web that delineated at least six different meanings of a word” (p.5).

This article is going to be very important because I have never thought about using a semantic web as a part of my vocabulary instruction. By using a semantic web my students will be able to see words that are like the focus word and also words that are different than the

focus word. The semantic map will also be helpful when there are many different definitions to one of our focus words.

McCarten, J. (2007). Teaching Vocabulary. Retrieved on February 12,2012 from
http://www.cambridge.org/other_files/downloads/esl/booklets/McCarten-Teaching-Vocabulary.pdf

This article will be very helpful to me in the classroom because it discusses several different ways that I as an educator can work with my students to help them develop strategies to be able to dissect the vocabulary word down into several smaller words. With my new group of students I have noticed that they really struggle with breaking down their vocabulary words down into basic word parts. I am really excited because this article will really help me teach them the strategies needed to be successful with their vocabulary words each week.

A few of the strategies that the article mentions is “1.The meaning(s) of the word, 2. It’s spoken and written forms, 3. What “word parts” it has (e.g., any prefix, suffix, and “root” form); 4. It’s grammatical behavior (e.g., its word class, typical grammatical patterns it occurs in), 5. Its collocations; 6. Its register; 7. What associations it has (e.g., words that are similar or opposite in meaning), 8. What connotations it has; 9. Its frequency” (McCarten, p.18). Determining a vocabulary words associations is very important because students may have seen words that are similar or opposite in meaning to their new vocabulary words. Teachers can use these known words as a basis when discussing the new vocabulary word.

Miller, S. (2011). Vocabulary Development Elementary Education and Middle Grades. Retrieved on February 9, 2012 from
<http://msit.gsu.edu/Readingconsortium/Literacylens/html/Miller%20Vocabulary%20Development.pdf>

This article is about a specific vocabulary strategy that Mrs. Miller has used successfully with her students. The strategy that Mrs. Miller uses is called “Concept Cards” these concept cards allow students “to learn different general or technical vocabulary....Students learn more than just definitions, the students learn the word in a deep and full manner” (p.4). I am really looking forward to using some of these concept cards in my classroom with this set of students. They are really struggling with remembering what their different vocabulary words mean as well as just understanding them in general. Concept cards will be very effective because my students will take them home each night and study them for fifteen minutes a night. I also have some activities that will go along with the concept cards that my students will fill out each night.

Prezler, June. (2006) *On Target: Strategies to Build Student Vocabularies* retrieved on January 14, 2012 from <http://www.sdesa6.org/content/docs/StrategiesVocabulary-080808.pdf>

This article is filled with different types of strategies that evoke all the different learning styles that my students have. I am very excited about this source because it has both strategies and games that are fun and enhance vocabulary skills at the same time. Some of the strategies and games that are introduced are: “1. Discussion Starter Web, 2. Frontloading, 3. Semantic Feature Analysis, 4. Jeopardy, 5. Talk Fast- Talk a Mile a Minute, 6. Pictionary, 7. The

Pyramid Game, 8. Crossword Puzzles, 9. Synectic Comparisons, 10. Word Sorts, 11.

Vocabulary Notebooks, and 12. Magic Squares”.

These are all strategies that I am very eager to use with my students. I believe that one or more of these strategies will help each and every individual student in my classroom. One strategy that I plan to have all my students use is the Vocabulary Notebook strategy because I believe that it will help my students have a visual reminder of each and every word that we have come across during the year. I know that my students will enjoy being able to see how they have grown in their vocabulary knowledge.

Silverman, Rebecca (2009): *A multidimensional approach to Vocabulary Instruction: Supporting English Language Learners in Inclusive Classrooms*. Retrieved on January 14, 2012 from <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/30098/>.

This article is about ways to support the development of my student’s vocabulary. A few of the ways are: “1. Introducing words through engaging children’s literature; 2. Providing children with clear definitions and explanations of words; 3. Encourage children to think of examples in various contexts; 4. Guide children to compare and contrast words; 5. Invite children to act out words and/or show children how to illustrate words; 6. Ask children to pronounce words; 7. Direct children’s attention to how words are spelled; and 8. Repeat words and reinforce word learning” (p.1-3). These are all very good strategies to use when presenting new vocabulary words to students.

This article will be a great resource for my project because all these strategies will allow my students to take each new vocabulary word and apply it to their lives outside of the classroom. I am really eager to use one of the strategies in particular, it is inviting children to

act out words and/or show children how to illustrate words. I am very eager to see how my students will respond to acting out their vocabulary words or drawing them.

Research Questions

1. What effect does learning centers have on increasing vocabulary?
2. What effect does classroom participation have on increasing students' vocabulary?
3. What effect does small group vocabulary instruction have on increasing student's vocabulary?

Data Collection Matrix

Research Questions	Data Source 1	Data Source 2	Data Source 3
1. What effect does learning centers have on increasing students	Learning Center Worksheets	Pre-test Vocabulary words for Week	Post-test Vocabulary words for Week

vocabulary recall?			
2. What effect does classroom participation have on increasing students' vocabulary recall?	School Progress Report/Report Card	Daily Center/Class observations.	Student Interviews about their participation using the different vocabulary strategies
3. What effect does small group vocabulary instruction have on increasing student vocabulary recall?	Teacher/Student Small Group Journals	Math Goal E.O.G. Standardized Assessments: Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4 (North Carolina State Board of Education)	Student Portfolio's

To help me answer research question number, what effect does learning centers have on increasing students' vocabulary recall, the first source used will be Learning Center Worksheets. I will use the learning center worksheets to help my students keep on track with the usage of their vocabulary words on a daily basis. Each day my students will go to a learning center where they will be asked to do various games and activities that will further along their knowledge and usage of their vocabulary. The second source used will be weekly pre-tests. I will be using the pre vocabulary test to assign my students their vocabulary words for the week. It also helps me make the groups for the learning centers. I will also use the pre vocabulary test to make up the different centers

for that week based on the needs of my students. The third source used will be weekly post-tests. I will use the post vocabulary test to see how each of my students have grown.

To help me answer research question number two, what effect does classroom participation have on increasing students' vocabulary, the first source used will be school progress reports/report cards. The school's progress reports and report cards have a place where the teacher can rate and discuss each student's participation. I plan to use these progress reports and report cards to record each individual student's level of participation during the seven week period. These reports will also be a way that I will let each student's parents know the level of their child's participation at any given time.

The second source will be daily center/class observations. This observation will be filled out on a daily basis during the learning center time. This observation sheet will allow me to address concerns during center times. For example, if I have a group that needs to be changed, I will document that on my observation sheet and it will be changed at the end of that day. I will also use this observation form during the group lesson during math time. This observation will allow me to document the students who have mastered a concept, and the students who need more help with a concept.

The third source will be student interviews about their participation. This interview will help me answer question two because my students will have to participate in a class discussion with at least one or two of their vocabulary words. They will be required to complete this interview during a small group time at the end of the day. This interview will allow me to monitor and track each student's participation.

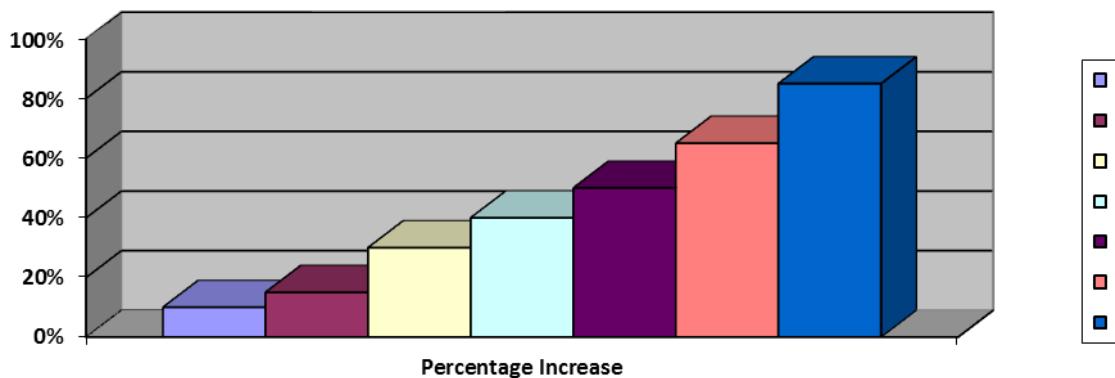
To help me answer question number three, what effect does small group vocabulary instruction have on increasing students' vocabulary, the first source used will be Teacher and Students Small Group Journals, I plan to use the Teacher and Students Small Group Journals to monitor my small groups to make sure that my small groups are effective and that the students in each of the groups are learning the vocabulary words that they are supposed to be learning each and every week. The second source used will be mock E.O.G's of each math goal, this data will be used to help create my small groups and vocabulary tests. During the third week in May my students will be taking the E.O.G for the state of North Carolina. I will take these results and compare them with my student's mock E.O.G. scores. The third source will be student portfolio's to monitor small group successes. By completing student portfolios I will be able to see in which skills my students have shown progress and those skills that they have not.

Data Analysis

Question 1: What effect does learning centers have on increasing the students' recall of vocabulary words?

First data source: The first data source was learning center worksheets (Appendix G). This source contributed to the research because these worksheets provided the evidence that was used to make a judgment on whether a center was an effective tool for increasing the students' recall of vocabulary words. After analyzing this data over the seven week period, sufficient evidence was produced that proved that learning centers do increase students' recall of vocabulary words. Each day students were placed into groups and given a learning center. The following data was collected during this seven week study:

Week #	Percentage Increase
1	10%
2	15%
3	30%
4	40%
5	50%
6	65%
7	85%



This data proves conclusively that Learning Centers do effect vocabulary word recall.

When students were provided with their weekly learning center they were expected to recall their various vocabulary words from previous units of study. The students were exposed to several different types of learning centers. A few examples were: defining the vocabulary word written on the board game space; providing their partner with clues to help them define the word written on their forehead; providing the vocabulary word that fits best in the sentence given; acting our characteristics of their vocabulary word; make semantic webs of their vocabulary words; make crossword puzzles with their words; and complete a concept card for each vocabulary word that they rolled.

Second data source: The second data source was a pre-test (Appendix B) of each week's vocabulary list. These pre-tests were used to assess the students' recall of their vocabulary words from past units and current units. These pre-tests showed that my students had a very basic vocabulary recall. They could recall the words that they used on a daily basis but had trouble recalling the words that they only used while in math class. Through the strategies presented in class and the learning centers my students will have an increased exposure to these vocabulary words, which should increase their vocabulary recall ten-fold.

Third data source: The third data source was a post-test (Appendix B) of each

Week #	Average Recalled	Total
1	8	11
2	9	15
3	10	20
4	11	22
5	6	16
6	8	19
7	10	23

week's vocabulary list. These post-tests were used to assess the students' knowledge of their vocabulary words from past units and current units. These tests were also used to

judge whether the learning centers that was used during that particular week were helpful or not. Post-tests were given on Fridays and given after a quick three minute review of their vocabulary words. This data proves that when students work with the vocabulary words all during the week they are twice as likely to successfully recall seventy-five percent of their vocabulary words at the end of the week.

Week #	Average Recalled	Total
1	11	17
2	12	15
3	14	20
4	17	22
5	12	16
6	16	19
7	18	23

These three data sources prove conclusively that students can successfully increase their vocabulary recall through strategies and learning centers. The students were exposed to several different strategies and learning centers throughout the seven week period and they showed significant increases in vocabulary recall throughout that entire seven week period.

Question 2: What effect does classroom participation have on increasing students' vocabulary?

First Data Source: The first data source for this question was a school progress report or report card (Appendix H). My school district requires teachers to send home progress reports every three weeks. I decided for this project to send home progress reports each week. On each progress report I listed the words that the students' has mastered along with the words the students still needs to master. These progress reports were sent home each Tuesday with their weekly work folders. They were sent home on Tuesdays because the students' parents would be able to see which words their student needs to work on and help them at home. It also allowed me to document whether the student was participating in class and they also gave me the opportunity to enlist parents help in motivating their students to participate in class.

Week #	% of increase in student participation
1	10
2	20
3	30
4	40
5	50
6	60
7	70

This data proves that when teachers and parents work together to help their children the students show an increase in participation. The progress reports allowed me to tell each students parents the specific vocabulary words that their child needs help on and they were then able to help their child study those words at home on a nightly basis.

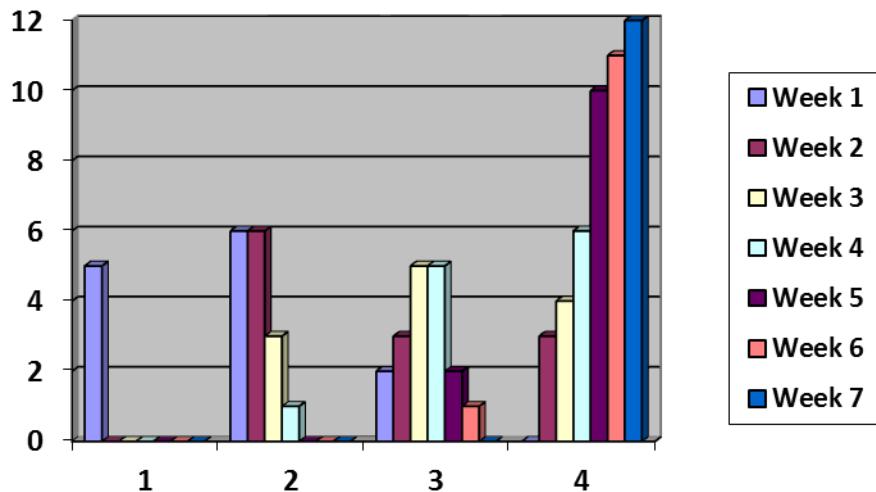
Second Data Source: The second data source for this question was daily center/class observations (Appendix E & F). These daily center/class observations quickly allowed me to note whether students comprehended the strategy that was being presented that day. It also allowed me to note particular students who were struggling with a particular vocabulary strategy or word; as well as document those students who were mastering that strategy or word. After observing the different centers I would reflect on what kinds of participation the students were showing during their learning centers. I would also reflect on ways that I can improve the students' participation.

During the observations I noted that students were beginning to take their learning centers seriously but there were still a few that need a little more stimulation to increase their participation. I also noted that I planned to begin implementing a reward system. Each day students' would be able to earn up to five or ten participation points and when they reached fifty participation points they would be able to trade them in for a small prize, eighty points for a medium prize, and one hundred twenty points for a large prize.

Week #	Group 1 participation rate	Group 2 participation rate	Group 3 participation rate
1	50%	25%	75%
2	25%	30%	50%
3	45%	35%	60%
4	55%	50%	65%
5	70%	75%	70%
6	80%	85%	93%
7	98%	98%	98%

This data proves conclusively that when students are motivated by external means there is an increase in student participation. When the students were offered just intrinsic means of motivation student participation was very low, but when students were offered a variety of prizes for various levels of participation student participation increased exponentially.

Third Data Source: The third data source for this question was a student interview (Appendix I) that was completed during their daily center time. This student interview allowed for the students to rate their participation for that day themselves.



This graph shows that as the seven weeks went by the students began to rate their participation higher. The interviews that the students completed also gave the students the opportunity to express their reasons for rating their participation the way that they did. The students were asked to describe something new that they learned about their vocabulary words and which vocabulary word(s) did they participate the most with in class and why. Having my students give explanations for their ratings was really

beneficial because it allowed me to come up with new strategies to help motivate them based on how they participated the previous weeks.

Question 3: What effect does small group vocabulary instruction have on increasing student vocabulary?

Data Source 1: The first data source for this question was a Teacher/Student Small Group Journal (Appendix D & E). This journal allowed me to observe each small group individually on a daily basis. While a group was working with me at the white board, I would be able to document the students that seemed to be having problems connecting the different strategies presented to the group during instruction. The student small group journals allow the students to reflect on the different vocabulary strategies presented and whether they liked them or not and why. This data source is important to this project because it allows the students to reflect on what strategies have been presented and reflect whether they found them helpful or not with their vocabulary recall. During week one, I observed that groups one, two and three seemed to have some trouble connecting the use of a semantic web with their vocabulary words. They had trouble realizing that semantic webs help them connect their vocabulary words to their synonyms, antonyms, definitions, word families, and many more. I noted in my journal that I planned to increase the use of word webs during our whole group reading instruction to help my students become familiar with the uses of word webs.

During week two, I observed that the groups really seemed to enjoy using the concept cards that were presented this week. The concept cards asked students to define

their vocabulary words in their own words, as well as identify any antonyms or synonyms of the words, as well as sketch an example of the vocabulary words. The students stated that they enjoyed making these concept cards because they were able to redefine the vocabulary word with their own words. They also enjoyed getting to sketch what they believed the vocabulary word would look like.

During week three, I observed that groups one and two enjoyed using the vocabulary anchors because they were able to successfully connect the vocabulary words with words that they already knew. They really seemed to understand that when you connect the word to something that you already know you develop a new understand of your vocabulary words. Group three did not enjoy using these vocabulary anchors because they had a lot of trouble connecting their vocabulary words to similar words that they already knew because they were not able to really understand their vocabulary words so they were not able to successfully make a connection.

During week four, I observed that groups one, two and three enjoyed using Pictionary with their vocabulary words this week because they were able to act out their vocabulary words either by doing an action that resembles the word or by drawing the definition of the word. The students seemed to be able to recall the definitions of their vocabulary words a whole lot better after this strategy because they had a picture or action to connect the word with.

During week five, I observed that groups one and three enjoyed doing the crossword puzzles with their vocabulary words. I created clues for each of the vocabulary words and they had to figure out which vocabulary word belonged to each clue. Group two did well with this strategy but did not enjoy using it because they thought that it was

a boring activity compared to the other activities and strategies that had been used over the past few weeks.

During week six, I observed that groups two and three enjoyed doing the pyramid game. This game has students quiz each other on their vocabulary words but giving each other clues that relate to a words definition. The other partner has to guess the word based on the clues that they are given. Group one did not really enjoy this game because they were not able to give their partners the most effective clues and therefore they were not as successful as the other two groups.

During week seven, I observed that group one, two and three enjoyed playing a Jeopardy game for the last unit of vocabulary words as well as a review game of all the vocabulary words for the school year. This jeopardy game had a variety of vocabulary words from all seven weeks of this project.

Second data source: The second data source for this question is a Math Goal Standardized Assessment for Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3 and Goal 4 from the North Carolina State Board of Education) These standardized assessments were released in 2009 and were available online from the North Carolina Department of Instruction website. These assessments were released for teachers to use while reviewing with their students for the End of Grade Assessments. These assessments were important to this project because it provided further evidence whether students were able to recall and understand their vocabulary words from this year. During the month of January, students across the county are required to take these assessments so that we can make sure that they are progressing as needed to succeed at the end of the school year. These were the standardized tests scores from January.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
22%	30%	40%	50%

After week seven of this project the students took these assessments again to see what effect this project had on their results.

Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	Goal 4
32%	45%	50%	60%

These test results prove conclusively that the seven different strategies are very effective in producing increasing vocabulary recall in students.

Data Source 3: The third data source for this project was a student portfolio checklist (Appendix C). At the beginning of each school I start a portfolio for each of my students and place their best work in these portfolios so that when their parents come for conferences I can show them some of their student's best work. For this project I created a separate portfolio because I wanted this information to remain separate from the students other work. I also created a checklist for the data that should be in the portfolio to ensure that all the data was there when it was time for me to look back over the files. This checklist helped the students and I keep track of what they needed to complete their portfolios. The portfolios also helped me establish individual data trends for each student, (i.e., when did their scores increase, when did they decrease, did they miss a group journal, etc).

Wrap-up: Overall this project has been a great learning experience for both my students and I. Throughout this whole project my students have been challenged to

increase their memory recall of their vocabulary words through games, new strategies, journals, pre-tests, post-tests, and interviews. When I compiled all of this evidence together I realized that this project has been a very beneficial project because the students have been able to take something they learned from this project with them when they move on to fifth grade.

Action Plan

I have learned quite a few things from this project. One of the first things that I learned was that when games are used in the correct manner and used continually they can be really helpful with students' recall of vocabulary words. The second thing that I learned during this project was that participation in learning centers and class discussions can affect a students' ability to successfully recall vocabulary words.

During this project my students grew in their ability to recall their vocabulary words as well as their ability to define their vocabulary words. The students were not the only ones who grew from this project, I grew as well. I learned that I need to help my students see the benefits of participating in class. Before this project, I would just ask students to participate so that I would not be the only one talking, but after this project I have realized that my students would benefit more from truly participating in class instead of just doing it because it is required.

When I walk down the hallway at my school, I hear several teachers treating vocabulary the way that I used to before and that was with an attitude of "Here we go again, the students are never going to understand these vocabulary words". Teachers need to realize that when we view vocabulary as a waste of time the students will as well.

When we put more emphasis on vocabulary it will help our students see that they will benefit from the vocabulary strategies that we are presenting.

There are several things that I plan to do differently this upcoming school year because of this project. One of the first things that I plan to change is my use of daily vocabulary centers for all core subjects, (e.g. math, science, social studies, and language arts). Over the past few years I have only used vocabulary centers for language arts but through this project I have discovered that students also benefit from daily vocabulary centers in other subjects as well. Another area that I plan to improve this year is using the vocabulary strategies presented in this paper from the beginning of the school year. Currently these vocabulary strategies were only used during the last four weeks of school, but I plan to use them from the beginning of the year next school year so that my students will be able to benefit from them all the way through the school year.

Each week the fourth grade teachers at my school gather together and plan for the next week. I plan to discuss my project with them and the data that I gathered from this project and why it was beneficial for my students and how they can make it beneficial for their students as well. I also plan to submit this paper to the E.R.I.C. database that way other teachers out of my area can benefit from this research as well.

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Appendix A

Data Collection Matrix

Research Questions	Data Source 1	Data Source 2	Data Source 3
4. What effect does learning centers have on increasing students vocabulary recall?	Learning Center Worksheets	Pre-test Vocabulary words for Week	Post-test Vocabulary words for Week
5. What effect does classroom participation have on increasing students' vocabulary recall?	School Progress Report/Report Card	Daily Center/Class observations.	Student Interviews about their participation using the different vocabulary strategies
6. What effect does small group vocabulary instruction have on increasing student vocabulary recall?	Teacher/Student Small Group Journals	Math Goal E.O.G. Standardized Assessments: Goal 1, Goal 2, Goal 3, Goal 4 (North Carolina State Board of Education)	Student Portfolio's

Appendix B

Goal 1 Pre-test/Post-test

1. Rational Number
2. Standard Form
3. Expanded Notation
4. Written Form
5. Picture Form
6. Place Value
7. Base Ten Blocks
8. Approximately/About
9. Multiply
10. Improper Fractions
11. Mixed Number
12. Equivalent Fractions
13. Decimal Fraction
14. Decimal
15. Number Line
16. Numerator

17. Denominator

Appendix C

Student Portfolio Checklist: (Teacher checks for each student)
Name: _____

Date: _____

- Unit 1 Vocabulary List
- Unit 2 Vocabulary List
- Unit 3 Vocabulary List
- Unit 4 Vocabulary List
- Unit 1 pre-test
- Unit 2 pre-test
- Unit 3 pre-test
- Unit 4 pre-test
- Unit 1 vocabulary definitions
- Unit 1 vocabulary sentences
- Unit 2 vocabulary definitions
- Unit 2 vocabulary sentences
- Unit 3 vocabulary definitions
- Unit 3 vocabulary sentences
- Unit 4 vocabulary definitions
- Unit 4 vocabulary sentences
- Unit 1 post-test
- Unit 2 post-test
- Unit 3 post-test
- Unit 4 post-test
- Student Small Group Journal Week 1
- Student Small Group Journal Week 2
- Student Small Group Journal Week 3
- Student Small Group Journal Week 4
- Student Small Group Journal Week 5
- Student Small Group Journal Week 6
- Student Small Group Journal Week 7

Appendix D

Student Journal

Name: _____

Journal # _____

Date: _____

Daily Vocabulary Words: _____

The vocabulary words that I learned today were:

I (liked, did not like) the vocabulary strategy presented today because:

Teacher Journal

Date: _____

Group Observed: 1 2 3

or

Learning Center Observed: _____

1. Were students able to use their weekly vocabulary words effectively at the center? How?
2. Did students seem to enjoy working at the center? Why or why not?
3. Are there any changes that need to be made to the center or to the students in the group?

Appendix F

Teacher Observation Journal (Entire Class)

Date: _____
Observation #: _____

1. List students who seemed to struggle with vocabulary words today?
2. List students who are mastering vocabulary words?
3. How did students participate today?

How can student participation be increased?

Appendix G

Learning Center Worksheet: (Student will work out problem or list vocabulary word used and/or the needed definition of their vocabulary word)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Student Progress Report

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

Week #: _____

_____ has mastered the following words:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

_____ still needs to master the following words:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

7.

Ways that you can help your child master their vocabulary words:

Student Interview: (Will be completed by student in small group)

Name:

Date:

Level of Participation Today: 1 2 3 4

What is something new that you learned about your vocabulary words today?

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Which vocabulary word(s) did you participate the most with in class today? Why?

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